

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A source-side communication apparatus which selects a best path suitable for routing a call,  
5 comprising:

source-side routing data management means for collecting information necessary for path calculation, evaluating possible paths with the collected information, and managing routing data that is obtained through the  
10 path evaluation;

source-side best path finding means for finding a best path from among those listed in the routing data;

connection releasing means for releasing a particular connection when said source-side best path  
15 finding means has found a new best path that is more suitable for the particular connection than a path being currently used, while maintaining the connectivity of other existing calls; and

new best path setting means for performing a call  
20 connection procedure by using the new best path, after said connection releasing means has released the current connection.

2. The communication apparatus according to  
25 claim 1, wherein said connection releasing means releases connections on an individual connection basis, or on an individual port basis.

3. The communication apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said new best path setting means sets up a connection over the new best path, while masking particular existing connections.

4. A destination-side communication apparatus which selects a best path suitable for routing a call,, comprising:

10 destination-side routing data management means for collecting information necessary for path calculation, evaluating possible paths with the collected information, and managing routing data that is obtained through the path evaluation;

15 destination-side best path finding means for finding a best path from among those listed in the routing data;

connection release requesting means for sending a connection release request for a particular connection  
20 when said destination-side best path finding means has found a new best path that is more suitable for the particular connection than a path being currently used, while maintaining the connectivity of other existing calls.

25 5. The communication apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said connection release requesting means requests releasing of connections on an individual

connection basis, or on an individual port basis.

6. A communications system which selects a best path suitable for routing a call, comprising:

5 (a) a source-side communication apparatus comprising:

source-side routing data management means for collecting information necessary for path calculation, evaluating possible paths with the collected information,  
10 and managing routing data that is obtained through the path evaluation,

source-side best path finding means for finding a best path from among those listed in the routing data,

connection releasing means for releasing a  
15 particular connection when said source-side best path finding means has found a new best path that is more suitable for the particular connection than a path being currently used, while maintaining the connectivity of other existing calls, and

20 new best path setting means for performing a call connection procedure by using the new best path, after said connection releasing means has released the current connection; and

(b) a destination-side communication apparatus  
25 comprising:

destination-side routing data management means for collecting information necessary for path calculation,

evaluating possible paths with the collected information,  
and managing routing data that is obtained through the  
path evaluation,

destination-side best path finding means for  
5 finding a best path from among those listed in the routing  
data, and

connection release requesting means for sending a  
connection release request for a particular connection  
when said destination-side best path finding means has  
10 found a new best path that is more suitable for the  
particular connection than a path being currently used,  
while maintaining the connectivity of other existing calls.

7. The communications system according to  
15 claim 6, wherein said connection releasing means releases  
connections on an individual connection basis, or on an  
individual port basis.

8. The communications system according to  
20 claim 6, wherein said connection release requesting means  
requests releasing of connections on an individual  
connection basis, or on an individual port basis.

9. The communications system according to  
25 claim 6, wherein said new best path setting means sets up  
a connection over the new best path, while masking  
particular existing connections.

09040009 00004  
T00000 60000000